

SIR MATTHEW HALE's

AFFECTIONATE

E P I S T L E S

TO HIS

CHILDREN.

W I T H

D I R E C T I O N S

CONCERNING THE

RELIGIOUS OBSERVATION

OF THE

L O R D ' s D A Y.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

The LIFE of the AUTHOR.

A NEW EDITION.

S A L I S B U R Y:

Printed by B. C. COLLINS, and sold by S. CROWDER,
Paternoster-Row, London; and the other Bookfellers.

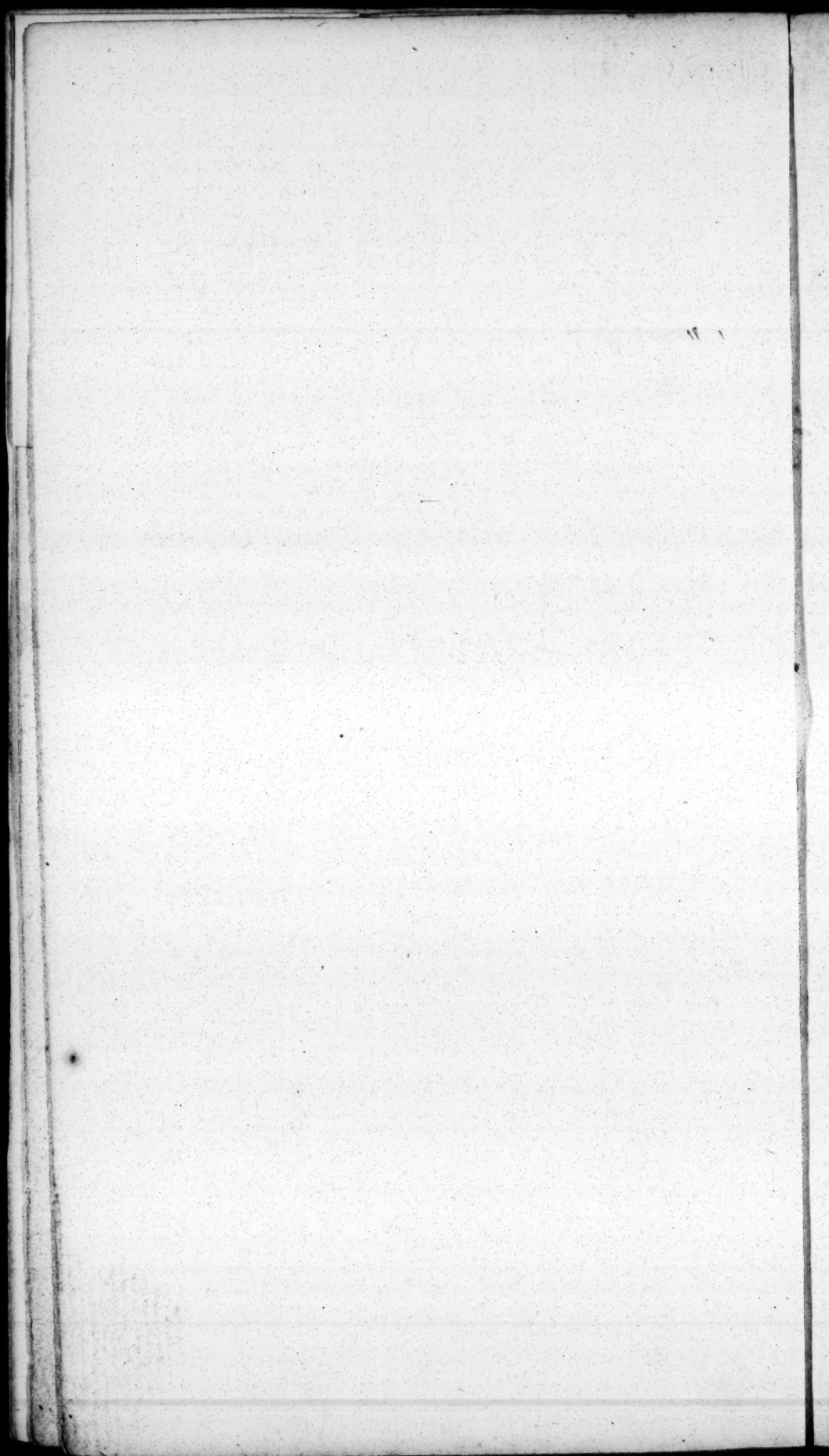
M.DCC.LXXXVIII.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editor, in presenting this Work to the Public, avails himself of the prevalent good Sense of Parents, and a Consciousness of the Importance of putting Books of virtuous Tendency in the Hands of Youth in general: In this View, to doubt Approbation—would perhaps be Ignorance. He professes himself influenced by no Motive, but the Satisfaction and Desire of —*pointing to that which is good.*

F.





THE LIFE OF
Sir MATTHEW HALE.

IR Matthew Hale, a man of great learning and integrity, and Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench in the last century, was born at Alderly, in Gloucestershire, Nov. 1, 1609. His grandfather was Robert Hale, an eminent clothier in the same county, where he and his ancestors had lived for many descents, and were remarkable for their liberality to the poor. This Robert acquired an estate of ten thousand pounds, which
B he

he divided equally amongst his five sons, besides the portions he gave his daughters. His second son was Robert Hale, a Barrister of Lincoln's Inn, who married Joan, the daughter of Matthew Poyntz, of Alderly, Esq. Of this marriage, the great man, the subject of these memoirs, was the only issue. His father was a man of that strictness of conscience, that he gave over the practice of the law, because he could not understand the reason of giving colour in pleadings, which he thought was to tell a lie, and that, with some other things commonly practised, seemed to him contrary to that exactness of truth and justice which became a christian, so that he withdrew himself from the Inns of Court, to live on his estate in the country. (A rare instance! and scarcely to be found now-a-days.) But as the care he had to save his soul, made

SIR MATTHEW HALE. 3.

made him abandon a profession by which he might have raised his family much higher, so his charity made him not only deal his alms largely while he lived, but at his death he left 20l. per ann. to the poor at Wotton, which his son confirmed to them with some additions.

Thus he was descended rather from a good than a noble family; and what was wanting in the insignificant titles of high birth, and “the boast of heraldry,” was more than made up in the worth of his ancestors. But he was soon deprived of his father’s care and instruction—as his mother died when he was three years old, so his father died when he was no more than five. But as Providence, when it takes one blessing from us, or one friend, takes care to raise up another for our comfort, so was he taken under the care of

Anthony Kingscot, Esq. who was his next kinsman, after his uncles, by his mother.

Great care was taken of his education, and his guardian intended to breed him a Divine, and being inclined to the Puritans, he was put to schools that were taught by that party, and in the seventeenth year of his age he was sent to Magdalen Hall, in Oxford. He was an extraordinary proficient at school, and for some time at Oxford; but the players coming thither, by seeing so many plays, he was so much corrupted, that he almost wholly forsook his studies, by which he lost much time, which he was not only sensible of, but found his head filled with vain images of things, which were unprofitable, if not hurtful to him, therefore he resolved upon coming to London, never to see

see a play more, to which he strictly adhered.

The corruption of a young man's mind in one particular, frequently brings on a great many more after it; so now being taken off from following his studies, and from that gravity which was before his characteristic, he now set himself to many of the vanities incident to younger years, but yet he preserved his purity, and a great probity of mind. He loved fine cloaths, and delighted much in company, and being of a strong and robust make, he was master of all those exercises which require strength and agility of body. He learned to fence, in which he became so expert, that scarcely any could master him in that art. One of his teachers told him one day that he could now instruct him no more, for that he was now

better at his trade than he himself was; this Hale looked upon as flattery, to make a discovery of which, he promised him the house he lived in (for he was his tenant), if he would hit him on the head, and bid him do his best for he would be as good as his word; after a little engagement, the master being really superior, hit him on the head, and he performed his promise freely. This instance shewed a good judgment, and gave some hopes of better things; and he was not unwilling at that rate to learn so early, to distinguish flattery from truth. He was now so taken up with martial matters, that instead of being a scholar or divine, he resolved to be a soldier; and his tutor Obadiah Sedgewick going to the Low Countries, Chaplain to the renowned Lord Vere, he resolved to go along with him, and to trail a pike in the Prince of Orange's army;

army; but a happy stop was put to this resolution, which might have proved fatal to himself, and deprived his country of the great example he gave, and the useful services he did. He was engaged in a suit of law with Sir William Whitmore, who laid claim to part of his estate, and his guardian being a man of a retired temper, and not made for business, he was obliged to leave the University, after he had been three years in it, and go to London to solicit for his own business. Being recommended to Serjeant Glanvil for his Counsellor, and he observing in him a clear apprehension of things, and a solid judgment, and a great fitness for the law, took pains to persuade him from being a soldier, and to apply to the law; this had so good an effect on him, that on the eighth of November, 1632, he was admitted into Lincoln's Inn, and

being sensible how much time he had lost, he resolved to redeem it, and followed his studies with a diligence that scarcely could be believed, if the signal effects of it did not gain it credit. He studied for many years at the rate of sixteen hours a day; he threw aside all fine cloaths, and betook himself to a plain fashion, which he continued to his dying day. Yet he did not at first break off from keeping too much company with some vain people, till a sad accident drove him from it; for he and some other young students, being invited out of town to be merry, one of them called for so much wine, that notwithstanding all Mr. Hale could do to prevent it, he carried his excess to such an height, that he fell down dead before them. They were all much affrightened at it, and did what they could to bring him to himself again. Mr. Hale was so particularly affected,

affected, that he went into another room, fell on his knees, and prayed earnestly to God, both for himself and friend, that he might be restored to life again, and be forgiven for giving such countenance to excess; and he then vowed to God, that he would never again keep company in that manner, nor drink a health while he lived, and he most religiously observed his vow.

This wrought an entire change on him: he now entirely forsook all vain company, and divided himself between the duties of religion, and the studies of his profession; in the former he was so regular, that for 36 years time, he never once failed going to church on the Lord's day; this observation he made when an ague interrupted that constant course, and he reflected on it, as an acknowledgment of God's great goodness to

him, in so long a continuance of his health.

Not satisfied with the law books then published, but resolved to take things from the fountain head, he was very diligent in searching records, and with collections out of the books he read, together with his own learned observations, he made a most valuable common place book. He was early taken notice of by the Attorney General Noy, who directed him in his studies, and admitted him to such an intimacy, that he was called by many Young Noy. The great and learned Mr. Selden also soon found him out, and took such a liking to him, that he not only lived in great friendship with him, but made him one of his executors. Mr. Selden put him upon a more enlarged pursuit of learning, which he had before confined to his
own

SIR MATTHEW HALE. 11

own profession; so that he arrived in time to a considerable knowledge of the civil law, in arithmetic, algebra, and other mathematical sciences, as well as in physic, anatomy, and surgery. He was also conversant in experimental philosophy, and other branches of philosophical learning; and in ancient history and chronology. But above all, he seemed to have made divinity his chief study, so that those who read what he has written upon theological questions, might be inclined to think, that he had studied nothing else. "It is incredible, says Dr. Burnet, that one man in no great compass of years should have acquired such a variety of knowledge, and that, in sciences which require much leisure and application. But as his parts were quick, and his apprehension lively, his memory great, and his judgment strong, so his indus-

try was almost indefatigable. He rose always betimes in the morning; was never idle; scarce ever held any discourse about news, except with some few in whom he entirely confided. He entered into no correspondence by letters, except about necessary business, or matters of learning, and spent very little time in eating and drinking, for as he never went to public feasts, so he gave no entertainments but to the poor. He followed our Saviour's direction of feasting none but these literally; and in eating and drinking, he observed not only great plainness and moderation, but lived so philosophically that he always ended his meal with an appetite; by which he not only lost little time when he dined, but was fit for any exercise of the mind immediately after. By these means he gained a great deal of time, which others for the most part waste unprofitably." He

He took a strict account of his time, of which the reader will best judge by the following scheme he drew for a diary, and which shews, by the imperfection of the wording of them, they were only intended for his privacies; they are here set down with the simplicity in which he writ for his private use.

M O R N I N G.

1. To lift up the heart to God in thankfulness for renewing my life.

2. To renew my covenant with God in Christ. 1st. By renewed acts of faith, receiving Christ, and rejoicing in the height of that relation. 2. Resolution of being one of his people doing allegiance.

3. Adoration and prayer.

4. Setting a watch over my own infirmities

firmities and passions, over the snares laid in our way. *Perimus licitis.*

DAY EMPLOYMENT.

There must be an employment, two kinds. 1. Our ordinary calling to serve God in it. "It is a service to God, though never so mean." *Colos. 3.* Here faithfulness, diligence, chearfulness. Not to overlay myself with more business than I can bear.

Our spiritual employments: mingle somewhat of God's immediate service in this day.

REFRESHMENTS.

1. Meat and drink, moderation seasoned with somewhat of God.

2. Recreations, 1. Not our business. 2. Suitable. No games, if given to covetousness or passion.

SIR MATTHEW HALE. 15

I F A L O N E.

1. Beware of wandering, vain, lustful thoughts; fly from thyself rather than entertain these.

2. Let thy solitary thoughts be profitable; view the evidences of thy salvation, the state of thy soul, the coming of Christ, thy own mortality, it will make thee humble and watchful.

C O M P A N Y.

Do good to them. Use God's name reverently. Beware of leaving an ill impression of ill example. Receive good from them if more knowing.

E V E N I N G.

Cast up the accounts of the day. If ought be amiss, beg pardon. Gather resolution of more vigilance. If well,
blefs

blefs the mercy and grace of God that hath fupported thee.

Our author paffing from the extreme of vanity in his drefs, to that of neglecting himfelf too much, was once taken by a prefs-gang, as a perfon fit for the king's fervice; for he was a ftrong and a well-built man; but fome coming by that knew him, and giving notice who he was, the prefs-men let him go. This made him return to more decency in his cloaths, but never to any fuperfluity or vanity in them.

Once as he was buying fome cloth for a fuit of cloaths, the draper, with whom he differed about the price, told him, he fhould have it for nothing if he would promife him an hundred pounds when he came to be Lord Chief Juftice of England; to which he answered,
That

That he could not with a good conscience wear any man's cloth, unless he paid for it; so he paid the draper his price, and carried away the cloth; yet the draper lived to see him advanced to that dignity.

Some time before the civil wars broke out, he was called to the bar, and began to make a figure in the world; but upon their breaking out, observing how difficult it was to preserve his integrity, and yet live securely, he resolved to follow those two rules of Pomponius Atticus, whom he proposed to himself as a pattern, *viz.* "To engage in no faction, nor meddle in public business, and constantly to relieve and favour those that were lowest." He often relieved the royalists in their necessities, which so ingratiated him with them, that he was generally employed by them.

He

He was one of the counsel to the Earl of Strafford, Archbishop Laud, and King Charles; as also to the Duke of Hamilton, the Earl of Holland, the Lord Capel, and the Lord Craven. But being esteemed a plain honest man, and of great knowledge in the law, he was entertained by both parties. In 1643, he took the covenant, and appeared several times with other lay persons among the assembly of divines. He was then in great esteem with the Parliament, and employed by them in several affairs for his counsel, particularly in the reduction of the garrison at Oxford; being, as a lawyer, added to the commissioners named by the Parliament, to treat with those appointed by the King. In that capacity he did good service, by advising them, especially General Fairfax, to preserve that famous seat of learning from ruin. Afterwards,
though

SIR MATTHEW HALE. 19

though he was grieved at Charles's death, he took the oath called the Engagement; and, on the 20th of January, 1651-2, was one of those appointed to consider of the reformation of the law; and Cromwell knowing his great abilities, never left importuning him, till he accepted of the place of one of the Justices of the Common Bench, for which purpose he was made Serjeant at Law, on January 25, 1653-4. In that station he acted with integrity and courage. He had at first great scruples concerning the authority under which he was to act: and after having gone two or three circuits, he refused to sit any more on the crown side. When Cromwell died, he excused himself from accepting the mourning that was sent him, and also refused the commission offered him by Richard. He did not sit in Cromwell's second Parliament in 1656,
but

but in Richard's, which met in January, 1658-9, he was one of the Burgeffes for the Univerfity of Oxford. In the Healing Parliament in 1660, which recalled King Charles II. he was elected one of the Knights for the county of Gloucefter, and moved that a committee might be appointed to look into the propofitions that had been made, and the concessions that had been offered by Charles I. during the late war, and from thence fuch propofitions might be digefted, as they fhould think fit, to be fent over to the King at Breda. The King upon his return recalled him in June to the degree of Serjeant at Law; and upon fettling the Courts in Weftminfter Hall, conftituted him in November Chief Baron of the Exchequer. When the Lord Clarendon delivered him his commiffion, he told him, that " If the King could have found out an honefter
and

and fitter man for that employment, he would not have advanced him to it; and that he had therefore preferred him, because he knew none that deserved it so well." It is usual for persons so promoted to be Knighted, but he desired to avoid having that honour done him; which the Lord Chancellor observing, sent for him upon business one day, when the King was at his house, and told his Majesty there was his modest Chief Baron; upon which, he was unexpectedly Knighted.

He continued eleven years in that place, managing the court with singular justice. It was observed by the whole nation how much he raised the reputation and practice of it; and those who held places in it could declare not only the impartiality of his justice, but his generosity, his vast diligence,
and

and his great exactness in trials. This gave occasion to the only complaint ever made of him, "that he did not dispatch matters quick enough." But the great care he used to put suits to a just and final end, made him slower in deciding them,—so that causes tried before him were seldom, if ever, tried again.

Nor did his administration of justice lie only in that court: he was one of the principal Judges that sat in Clifford's Inn, about the settling the difference between landlord and tenant, after the dreadful fire of London; he was the first that offered his service for accommodating all differences that might arise about rebuilding it, and he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of all persons concerned: so that the sudden and quiet building of the city, was in no small measure due to the

the great care of Sir Matthew Hale and Sir Orlando Bridgeman (then Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and afterwards Lord Keeper of the Great Seal), and the judgment they shewed in that affair; since without the rules then laid down, there might have followed such an endless train of vexatious suits, as might have been little less chargeable than the fire itself. Without detracting from others, it must be acknowledged that he was the most instrumental in that great work, for he first, by way of scheme, contrived the rules upon which he and the rest afterwards proceeded; to which his great readiness in arithmetic, and his skill in architecture, contributed not a little.

But it will not seem strange that a Judge behaved himself as he did, who, at the entry of his employment, set
these

these excellent rules to himself, which are copied from his own hand writing.

THINGS NECESSARY TO BE HAD IN
CONTINUAL REMEMBRANCE.

1. That in the administration of justice, I am intrusted for God, the King and country ; and therefore,

2. That it be done, 1. Uprightly.
2. Deliberately. 3. Resolutely.

3. That I rest not upon mine own understanding or strength, but implore and rest upon the direction and strength of God.

4. That in the execution of justice, I carefully lay aside my own passions, and not give way to them, however provoked.

5. That I may be wholly intent upon the business I am about, remitting all other cares and thoughts as unseasonable and interruptions.

6. That

6. That I suffer not myself to be prepossessed with any judgment at all, 'till the whole business, and both parties be heard.

7. That I never engage myself in the beginning of any cause, but reserve myself unprejudiced 'till the whole be heard.

8. That in business capital, though my nature prompt me to pity; yet to consider, that there is a justice due to my country.

9. That I be not too rigid in matters purely conscientious, where all the harm is diversity of judgment.

10. That I be not biased with compassion to the poor, or favour to the rich, in point of justice.

C

11. That

11. That the popular, or court applause, or distaste, have no influence into any thing I do in point of distributing of justice.

12. Not to be solicitous what men will say or think, so long as I keep myself exactly according to the rule of justice.

13. If in criminals it be a measuring cast, to incline to mercy and acquittal.

14. In criminals that consist merely in words, when no harm ensues, moderation is no injustice.

15. In criminals of blood, if the fact be evident, severity is justice.

16. To abhor all private solicitations, of what kind soever, and by whomsoever, in matters depending.

17. To

17. To charge my servants, 1. Not to interpose in any business whatsoever. 2. Not to take more than their known fees. 3. Not to give any undue precedence to causes. 4. Not to recommend council.

18. To be short and sparing at meals, that I may be the fitter for business.

He would never receive private addresses or recommendations from the greatest persons in any matter in which justice was concerned. One of the first Peers in England went once to his chamber, and told him, " That having a suit in law to be tried before him, he was then to acquaint him with it, that he might the better understand it, when it should come to be heard in court." Upon which the Lord Chief Baron interrupted him, and said, " He did not

deal fairly to come to his chamber about such affairs, for he never received any information of causes but in open court, where both parties were to be heard alike;" so he would not suffer his Grace to go on; so that the Duke went away very much dissatisfied, and complained of it to the King as a rudeness that was not to be endured.

But his Majesty bid him content himself that he was not worse used, and said, "He verily believed he would have used himself no better, if he had gone to solicit him in any of his own causes."

Another instance occurred; in one of his circuits, which also flowed from his exactness to the rules he had set himself.

A gentleman had sent him a buck for his table, that had a trial at the affizes; so when he heard his name, he asked, "If he was not the same person who had sent him venison?" and finding he was the same, told him, "he could not suffer the trial to go on, till he had paid him for his buck:" To which the gentleman answered, "That he never sold his venison, and that he had done nothing to him, which he did not do to every Judge that had gone that circuit;" which was confirmed by several gentlemen then present: but all would not do, for the Lord Chief Baron had learned from Solomon, that "*A gift perverteth the ways of judgment;*" and therefore, he would not suffer the trial to go on till he had paid for the present; upon which the gentleman withdrew the record. And at Salisbury, the Dean and Chapter of that City

having, according to custom, presented him with six sugar-loaves in his circuit, he made his servants pay for the sugar before he would try their cause. Of the strength and fulness of his arguments we have the following instance. When he was counsel for Lord Craven, he pleaded with that force of argument, that the then Attorney General, Edmund Prideaux, threatened him for appearing against the government: to whom he answered, "He was pleading in defence of those laws, which they declared they would maintain and preserve, and he was doing his duty to his client, so that he was not to be daunted with threatenings."

Sir Matthew Hale continued in his office of Lord Chief Baron till the 18th of May, 1671, when, on the death of the Lord Chief Justice, he was promoted
to

to that honour. And here he spent the rest of his public life and employment : but about four years and a half after his advancement, he, who had hitherto enjoyed a firm and vigorous health, to which his great temperance, and the equality of his mind, did not a little conduce, was on a sudden brought very low by an inflammation in his midriff, which in two days broke the constitution of his health to such a degree, that he never recovered it : he became so asthmatical, that with great difficulty he could fetch his breath, that determined in a dropsy, of which he afterwards died. He understood physick so well, that considering his age, he concluded his distemper must carry him off in a little time ; and he therefore resolved to have some of the last months of his life to himself, that being freed from all worldly cares, he might be preparing for

his change ; he was also so much disabled in his body, that he could hardly, though supported by his servants, walk through Westminster-Hall, or endure the toil of business : he had been a long time wearied with the distractions that his employment had brought on him, and his profession was become ungrateful to him ; he loved to apply himself wholly to better purposes, as will appear by the following paper, which he wrote on this subject.

1. If I consider the business of my profession, whether as an Advocate, or a Judge, it is true, I do acknowledge, by the institution of Almighty God, and the dispensation of his providence, I am bound to industry and fidelity in it : and as it is an act of obedience unto his will, it carries with it something of religious duty, and I may, and do take comfort
in

in it, and expect a reward of my obedience to him, and the good that I do to mankind therein, from the bounty and beneficence, and promise of Almighty God; and it is true also, that without such employments, civil societies cannot be supported, and great good redounds to mankind from them, and in those respects, the consciousness of my own industry, fidelity and integrity in them is a great comfort and satisfaction to me. But yet this I must say concerning these employments, considered simply in themselves, that they are very full of cares, anxieties, and perturbations.

2. That though they are beneficial to others, yet they are of the least benefit to him that is employed in them.

3. That they do necessarily involve the party, whose office it is, in great dangers, difficulties, and calumnies.

4. That they only serve for the meridian of life, which is short and uncertain.

5. That though it be my duty faithfully to serve in them, while I am called to them, and till I am duly called from them, yet they are great consumers of the little time we have here, which, as it seems to me, might be better spent in a pious contemplative life, and a due provision for eternity: I do not know a better temporal employment than Martha had, in testifying her love and duty to our Saviour, by making provision for him; yet our Lord tells her, that though she was troubled about many things, there was only one thing necessary, and Mary had chosen the better part.

By this the reader will see that he continued in his station upon no other
con-

consideration, but the being set in it by the Providence of God, he judged he could not abandon the post which was assigned him, without preferring his own private inclination to the choice God had made for him : but now that same Providence having, by this great distemper, disengaged him from the obligation of holding a place, which he was no longer able to discharge, he resolved to resign it : this was no sooner surmised abroad, than it drew upon him the importunities of his friends, and the clamour of the whole town, to divert him from it, but to no purpose : so that he made applications to his Majesty for his writ of ease, which the King was very unwilling to grant him, and offered to let him hold his place still (he doing what business he could in his chamber); but he said, “ He could not with a good conscience continue in it, since he was

no longer able to discharge the duties belonging to it."

His Majesty deferred granting his request as long as possible ; but at last, having wearied himself, and all his friends, with his importunate desires, and growing sensibly weaker in body, he formally surrendered his office the 21st of February, 28 Car. 1675-6. He had now nothing to do, but to prepare for that change which is equally the lot of all human beings ; he retired home with chearfulness, and calling all his servants of office together, dismissed them with considerable presents. He lived only to the December following ; but all the time was so ill, no hopes were given of his recovery ; he still continued to retire often, both for his devotion and studies. At last, as the winter came on, he saw, with great joy, his deliverance

ance approaching; for besides being weary of the world, and his longings for the blessings of another state, his pains so increased, that no patience inferior to his could have borne them so meekly; yet he expressed to the last such submission to the will of God, and such an equal temper under his afflictions, that it was visible, what mighty effects his philosophy and Christianity had on him, in supporting him under such a heavy and grievous load.

Not long before his death, the minister told him, " There was to be a sacrament next Sunday at church, but he believed he could not come and partake of it; therefore he would give it to him in his own house;" but he answered, " No, his heavenly Father had prepared a feast for him, and he would go to his Father's house and partake of it,"

it," which he, with the help of his servants, did.

He had some presages of his death, for he said, if he did not die on a certain day, viz. 25th of November, he should survive a month longer; and he died that day month.

His reason was continued to him to the last moments—He died in peace, having no strugglings, nor any seeming pangs in his last moments. He was buried the 4th of January, in the church-yard, at Alderly, with his ancestors.—He used to say, that "the churches were made for the living, and the church-yards for the dead. His monument was, like himself, decent and plain. The tomb-stone was black marble, and the sides were black and white marble, upon which he ordered this humble inscription to be made.

SIR MATTHEW HALE. 39

Hic inhumatur corpus
Matthei Hale, *Militis*;
Roberti Hale, *et Joannæ*
Uxoris ejus, *Filii unici.*
Nati in hac parochia de
Alderly, primo die Novembris,
Anno Domini 1609.
Denati vero Ibidem vicesimo
quinto die Decembris,
Anno Dom. 1676.
Ætatis suæ LXVII.

Having thus pursued this great man through the principal events of his life, and brought him to

“ That undiscovered country
“ From whose bourn no traveller returns ;”

We shall enlarge a little more upon his character and virtues. He rose always early; loved to walk abroad. He had a great vivacity of fancy, as appeared by his inclination to poetry, and the lively illustrations, and tender strains
in

in his contemplations; but he looked upon eloquence and wit as things to be used very chafely in ferious matters, and therefore was an enemy to all eloquence and rhetoric in pleading; he faid, " If a Judge or Jury had a right understanding, it fignified nothing but a wafte of time and loft words; and if they were weak, and eafily wrought on, it was a more decent way of corrupting them, by bribing their fancies, and biaffing their affections." But where a decent eloquence was allowable, Judge Hale knew how to have excelled as much as any, either in illuftrating his reafons, by proper and well purfued fimilies, or by fuch tender expreffions, as might work moft on the affections; fo that the Lord Chancellor faid, " He was the greateft orator he had known"—for though his words came not fluently from him, yet when they were out, they were as fignificant
and

and expressive, as the matter could bear. He was a devout Christian, and a sincere protestant ; moderate towards dissenters, and just to those with whom he differed most ; which appeared by the care he took of preserving the Quakers from the mischief they were exposed to, by declaring their marriages void, and bastardizing their children ; but he considered marriage and succession as a right of nature, from which none ought to be barred. He constantly worshipped God in his family. He had a soul enlarged above the mean appetite of loving money—he commonly remitted half his fee to those who came on ordinary matters to ask his advice ; and would never undertake any unjust cause. He laid aside a tenth of all he got for the poor, to whom he was an affectionate and liberal benefactor. If he met with any common beggars, he would
send

send them into the fields to pick stones, and lay them in a heap, for which he paid them well: he would then send his cart, and order his servants to mend such parts of the road as were bad with them. He loved building much, because it employed many poor people. He was a gentle landlord, and ever ready upon just complaints to any reasonable abatement, for he was merciful as well as righteous.

As he thought it unjust to offer bad money, he always laid it aside; so that having collected a pretty large heap, it attracted the notice of some thieves, who broke into his chamber and stole it, thinking they had a prize. Sir Matthew used to tell this story with some pleasure, to think how they found themselves deceived, when they perceived what kind of booty they had fallen on.

His

His curious and rare collection of books and manuscripts, which he was near 40 years in collecting, and which cost him near fifteen hundred pounds, he left to the Society of Lincoln's Inn; he calls it in his will, "a treasure worth having and keeping, and not for every man's view."

He was of a most tender and compassionate nature, and when he pronounced sentence of death, which was what went most against his grain, his speeches to the prisoners were so weighty, serious, and devout, that many used to say they heard very few such sermons.

His mercifulness extended to his beasts; and when his horses grew old, he would not suffer them to be overworked or sold; nor his dogs to be killed or lost. He

He was a great encourager of all young persons he saw followed their books diligently ; to whom he would give directions concerning their study, with a humanity and sweetness, that endeared all who knew him. He was free in discourse, and commonly fixed on some useful topic, and loved in the evening to enjoy his friends.

Having lost one of his sons, whose death had some grievous circumstances in it ; a friend condoling him on it, he said to him, "*Those were the effects of living long ; such must look to see many sad and unacceptable things.*"

He had a generous and noble idea of God in his mind, and this he found above all other considerations to preserve his quiet ; and so established was it in him,

him, that no accidents, however sudden, were observed to discompose him.

He was twice married, first to Ann, daughter of Sir Henry More, of Flay, in Berkshire, by whom he had ten children. He outlived them all, except his eldest daughter and youngest son: and secondly to Ann, daughter to Mr. Joseph Bishop, of Berkshire, by whom he had no issue.

We shall now conclude this history of his life and character with the sentiments of the following writers.

“ He was (says Mr. North) a man of great learning in the history, law, and records of the English constitution; an upright Judge, and allowed on all hands to be the most profound lawyer of his

his time.”—R. Baxter gives this character of him: “ He was an unwearied student, a prudent man, a solid philosopher, a famous lawyer, the pillar and basis of justice, the ornament of his Majesty’s government, and honour of England; the highest faculty of the soul at Westminster Hall, and pattern to all the reverend and honourable Judges, a godly, serious, and practical Christian, a lover of goodness, and all good men; a great contemner of riches, pomp, and vanity of the world, a pattern of honest plainness and humility, &c.”

As he was honoured while he lived, so he was lamented when he died, and the following character, drawn by Bishop Burnet, will be thought a just inscription to his memory; though his modesty forbid any such to be put on his tomb.

“ THAT

SIR MATTHEW HALE. 47

“ THAT HE WAS ONE OF THE GREAT-
“ EST PATTERNS THIS AGE HAS AFFORD-
“ ED, WHETHER IN HIS PRIVATE DE-
“ PORTMENT, AS A CHRISTIAN, OR IN
“ HIS PUBLIC EMPLOYMENTS, EITHER
“ AT THE BAR, OR ON THE BENCH.”



SIR MATTHEW HALE's
E P I S T L E S
T O H I S
C H I L D R E N.

EPISTLE THE FIRST.

DEAR CHILDREN,



I Intended to have been at Alderly this Whitsuntide, desirous to renew those counsels and advices which I have often given you, in order to your greatest concernment; namely, the everlasting good and welfare of your souls hereafter, and the due ordering of your lives and conversations here.

D

And

And although young people are apt, through their own indiscretion, or the ill advice of others, to think these kind of entertainments but dry and empty matters, and the morose and needless interpositions of old men : yet give him leave to tell you, that very well knows what he says, these things are of more importance and concernment to you, than external gifts and bounties ; wherein, nevertheless, I have not been wanting to you according to my ability.

This was my intention in this journey ; and though I have been disappointed therein, yet I thought good, by letters and messages, to do something that might be done that way for your benefit, that I had otherwise intended to have done for your person.

Assure

Affure yourselves therefore, and believe it from one that knows what he says, from one that neither can have any reason or end to deceive you, that the best gift I can give you, is good counsel ; and the best counsel I can give you, is that which relates to your greatest import and concernment ; namely, *religion*.

And therefore, since I cannot, at this time, deliver it to you in person, I shall do it by this letter ; wherein I shall not be very large, but keep myself within the bounds proper for a letter ; and those things only, at this time, which may be most of present use and moment to you : and by your due observance to these directions, I shall have a good character both of your dutifulness to God, your obedience to your father, and also of your discretion and prudence ; for it is most certain, that as religion is the best means to advance and rectify hu-

man nature, so no man shall be either truly wise, or truly happy without it, and the love of it; no, not in this life, much less in that which is to come.

I. Therefore every morning and evening, upon your knees, humbly commend yourselves to Almighty God in prayer, begging his mercy to pardon your sins, his grace to direct you, his providence to protect you; returning him humble thanks for all his dispensations towards you; yea, even for his very corrections and afflictions, intreating him to give you wisdom and grace, to make a sober, patient, humble, profitable use of them; and in his due time, to deliver you from them; concluding your prayers with the Lord's prayer. This will be a certain means to bring your mind into a right frame; to procure you comfort and blessing, and to prevent thousands of in-

con-

conveniences and mischiefs, to which you will be otherwise subjected.

2. Every morning read seriously and reverently a portion of the holy scripture, and acquaint yourself with the history and doctrine thereof: it is a book full of light and wisdom, will make you wise to eternal life, and furnish you with directions and principles, to guide and order your life safely and prudently.

3. Conclude every evening with reading some part of the scripture and prayer in your family.

4. Be strict and religious observers of the Lord's day; resort to your parish church twice that day, if your health will permit, and attend diligently and reverently to the public prayers and sermons; he cannot reasonably expect a

bleffing from God the reft of the week, that neglects his duty to God, in the due confecration of this day to the fpecial fervice and duty of God, which this day requires.

5. Receive the facrament, at leaft, three times in the year, and oftner as there is occafion, in your parifh church. The laws of the land require this, and the law of your Saviour requires it, and the law of duty and gratitude requires it of you. Prepare yourfelves ferioufly for this fervice beforehand, and perform it with reverence and thankfulnefs: the neglect of this duty procures great inconvenience and ftrangenefs; and commonly the neglect hereof arifeth from fome conceited opinion that people inconfiderately take up; but moft ordinarily from a fluggifhnefs of mind, and an

un-

unwillingness to fit and prepare the mind for it ; or to leave some sinful and vain course that men are not willing to leave, and yet condemn themselves in the practice of it.

6. Beware of those who go about to seduce you from that religion wherein you have been brought up hitherto ; namely, the true protestant religion : it is not unknown to any that observes the state of things in the world, how many erroneous religions are scattered abroad in the world ; and how industrious men of false persuasions are to make proselytes. There are Antinomians, Quakers, Anabaptists, and divers others that go about to mislead themselves and others ; nay, although the laws of this kingdom, and especially the statute of the 23 Eliz. cap. 1. have inflicted the severest penal-

ty upon those that go about to withdraw persons to the Romish religion, from the religion established in England, as any man that reads the statute may find: yet there are scattered up and down the world divers factors and agents, that, under several disguises and pretences, endeavour the perverting of weak and easy persons; take heed of all such persuaders. And that you may know and observe the better, you shall ever find these artifices practised by them: 1. They will use all flattering applications and insinuations to be master of your humour, and when they have gotten that advantage, they that seem before to serve you, will then command you. 2. They will use all possible skill to raise in you jealousy and dislike towards those who may otherwise continue and keep you in the truth; as to raise dislike in
you

you against your minister; nay, rather than fail, to raise dissention among relations; yea, to cast jealousies and surmises among them, if it may be instrumental to corrupt them. 3. They will endeavour to withdraw people from the public ministry of God's word, encourage men to slight and neglect it: and when they have once effected this, they have a fair opportunity to infuse their own corrupt principles. 4. They will engage you, by some means or other, to them; either by some real, but most ordinarily by some pretended kindness or familiarity; that in a little time, you shall not dare to displease them; you must do and speak what they will have you, because some way or other you are entangled with them, or engaged to them; and then they become your governors, and you will not dare to disobey them.

D 5

These

These are some of those artifices whereby crafty and subtle seducers gain profelytes, and bring men under captivity.

7. Be very careful to moderate your passions, especially of choler and anger ; it inflames the blood, disorders the brain, and, for a time, exterminates not only religion, but common reason ; it puts the mind into confusion, and throws wildfire into the tongue, whereby men give others advantage against them ; it renders a man incapable of doing his duty to God, and puts a man upon acts of violence, unrighteousness, and injustice to men : therefore keep your passions under discipline, and under as strict a chain as you would keep an unruly curst mastiff ; look to it, that you give it not too much line at first. But if it hath gotten any fire within you,
quench

quench it presently, with consideration, and let it not break out into passionate or unruly words and actions ; but whatever you do, let it not gangrene into malice, envy, or spite.

8. Send your children early to learn their catechism, that they take in the true principles of religion betimes, which may grow up with them, and habituate them both to the knowledge and practice of it ; that they may escape the danger of corruption by error or vice, being antecedently seasoned with better principles.

9. Receive the blessings of God with very much thankfulness to him, for he is the root and fountain of all the good you do, or can receive.

10. Bear all afflictions and crosses patiently ; it is your duty, for afflictions come not from the dust. The great God of heaven and earth is he that sends these messengers to you, though possibly evil occurrence may be the immediate instruments of them : you owe to Almighty God an infinite subjection and obedience, and to expostulate with him, is rebellion ; and as it is your duty, so it is your wisdom, and your prudence : impatience will not discharge your yoke, but it will make it gall the worse, and sit the harder.

11. Learn not only patience under your afflictions, but also profitably to improve them to your soul's good ; learn by them how vain and unprofitable the world, and the pleasures thereof, are, that a sharp, or a lingering sickness renders utterly tasteless. Learn how
vain

vain and weak a thing human nature is, which is pulled down to the gates of death, and cloathed with rottenness and corruption, by a little disorder in the blood, in a nerve, in a vein, in an artery. And since we have so little hold of a temporal life, which is shaken and shattered by any small occurrence, accident, or distemper: learn to lay hold on eternal life, and of that covenant of peace and salvation, which Christ hath bought for all that believe, and obey the gospel of peace and salvation: there shall be no death, no sickness, no pain, no weakness, but a state of unchangeable, and everlasting happiness: and if you thus improve afflictions, you are gainers by it; and most certain it is, that there is no more probable way under heaven to be delivered from affliction, if the wise God see it fit, than thus to improve it; for affliction is a messenger,

messenger, and the rod hath a voice; and that is, to require mankind to be the more patient, and the more humble, and the more to acknowledge Almighty God in all our ways : and if men listen to this voice of the rod, and conform to it, the rod hath done his errand ; and will either leave a man, or at least give a man singular comfort, even under the sharpest affliction ; and this *affliction which is but for a moment, thus improved, will work for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

12. Reverence your minister ; he is a wise, and a good man, and one that loves you, and has a tender care and respect for you : do not grieve him either by neglect or disrespect. Assure yourselves, if there be any person that sets any of you against him, or provokes or encourageth any of you to despise or neglect

neglect him, that person, whoever he be, loves not you, nor the office he bears; and therefore, as the laws of the land, and the Divine Providence, hath placed him at Alderly, to have a care of your souls; so I must tell you, I do expect you should reverence and honour him for his own, for your, and for his office sake.

And now I have written this long Epistle to you, to perform that office for me, that I should have done in person, if I could have taken this journey. The Epistle is long, but it had been longer had I had more time, And although perchance some there be in the world, that, when they hear of it, will interpret it to be but the excursions and morose rules of old age, unnecessary, and such as might have been spared; yet, I am persuaded, it will find better acceptance

tation from you that are my children. I am now on the shady side of threescore years; I write to you what you have often heard me in substance speak: and possibly when I shall leave this world, you will want such a remembrancer as I have been to you. 'The words that I now, and at former times have written to you, are words of truth and soberness; and words and advices that proceed from a heart full of love and affection to you all. If I should see you do amiss in any thing, and should not reprove you; or, if I should find you wanting counsel and direction, and should not give it you; I should not perform the trust of a father; and, if you should not thankfully receive it, you would be somewhat defective in the duty you owe to God, and me, as children. As I have never spared my purse to supply you according to my abilities,

abilities, and the reasonableness of occasions ; so I have never been wanting to you in good and prudent counsels ; and the God of Heaven give you wisdom, constancy, and fidelity in the observance of them.

I am,

Your ever loving Father,

May 20.

MATTHEW HALE.



EPISTLE THE SECOND.

Concerning their Speech.

CHILDREN,

 I Thank God I came well to Far-
rington this Saturday, about five
of the clock; and because I have some
leisure time at my inn, I could not
spend the time more to my own
contentment, and to your benefit, than
by my letter, to give you all good coun-
sel: the subject whereof, at this time,
shall be concerning speech; because
much of the good or evil that befalls
persons, doth occasionally happen by
the well or ill managing of that part of
human conversation. I shall, as I have
leisure

leisure and opportunity, at other times, give you my directions concerning other subjects.

And herein I shall advise you, first, how you are to entertain the speeches of others, according to the divers desires thereof. Secondly, how you are to manage and order your own speech.

I ft. As concerning the former, observe these directions.

I. Observe and mark, as well as you may, what is the temper and dispositions of those persons whose speeches you hear, whether they be grave, serious, sober, wise, discreet persons; if they be such, their speeches commonly are like themselves, and will deserve your attention and observation.

But

But if they be light, impertinent, vain, passionate persons, their speech is for the most part according; and the best advantage that you will gain by their speech, is but thereby to learn their dispositions, to discern their failings, and to make yourselves the more cautious both in your conversation with them, and in your own speech and deportment; for in the unseemliness of their speech, you may discern and avoid the like in yourselves.

2. If any person, that you do not very well know to be a person of truth, sobriety, and weight, relate strange stories, be not too ready or easy to believe them, nor report them after him: and yet (unless he be one of your familiar acquaintance) be not forward to contradict him, or if the necessity of the occasion require you to declare your
opinion

opinion of what is reported, let it be modestly and gently, not too bluntly or coarsely; by this means, on the one side, you shall avoid being abused by your too much credulity; on the other side, you shall avoid quarrels and distate.

3. If any man speak any thing to the disadvantage or reproach of one that is absent, be not too ready to believe it, only observe and remember it; for it may be, it is not true, or it is not all true, or some other circumstances mingled with it, which might give the business reported a justification, or at least an allay, an extenuation, or a reasonable excuse: in most actions, if that which is bad alone, or seems to be so, be reported, omitting that which is good, or the circumstances that accompany it, any action may be easily misrepresented; be not too hasty therefore to believe a reproach, till you know the truth, and the whole truth. 4. If

4. If any person report unto you some injury done to you by another, either in words or deeds, do not be over-hasty in believing it, nor suddenly angry with the person so accused; for possibly it may be false or mistaken; and how unseemly a thing will it be, when your credulity and passion carry you, upon a supposed injury, to do wrong to him that hath done you none; or, at least, when the bottom and truth of the accusation is known, you will be ashamed of your passion? Believe not a report, till the party accused be heard; and if the report be true, yet be not transported either with passion, hasty anger, or revenge, for that will be your own torment and perturbation: ever, when a person is accused, or reported to have injured you, before you give yourself leave to be angry, think with yourself, why should I be angry before I am certain

tain it is true? or, if it be true, how can I tell how much I should be angry till I know the whole matter? Though, it may be, he hath done wrong, yet possibly it is not so much as is reported, or it was done by mistake, or, it may be, he is sorry for it: I will not be angry 'till I know there be cause, and if there be cause, yet I will not be angry, 'till I know the whole cause, for 'till then, if I must be angry at all, yet I know not how much to be angry; it may be, it is not worth my anger, or if it be, it may be it deserves but a little. This will keep your mind and carriage, upon such occasions, in a due temper and order; and will disappoint malicious or officious tale-bearers.

5. If a man, whose integrity you do not very well know, makes you great and extraordinary professions and promises,

mises, give him as kind thanks as may be, but give not much credit to it: cast about with yourself what may be the reason of this wonderful kindness; it is twenty to one but you will find something that he aims at, besides kindness to you: it may be he hath something to beg or buy of you, or to sell to you, or some such bargain that speaks out, at least, his own advantage, and not yours, and if he serve his turn of you, or if he be disappointed, his kindness will grow cold.

6. If a man flatter and commend you to your face, or to one that he thinks will tell you of it, it is a thousand to one, either he hath deceived and abused you some way, or means to do so; remember the fable of the fox, commending the singing of the crow, when she

E

had

had somewhat in her mouth that the fox liked.

7. If a person be choleric, passionate, and give you ill language, remember, 1. Rather to pity him, than to be moved into anger and passion with him; for most certainly that man is in a distemper and disorder; observe him calmly, and you shall see him in so much perturbation and disturbance, that you will easily believe he is not a pattern to be imitated by you; and therefore return not choler or anger, for angry words; for you do but put yourself into a phrensy, because you see him so. 2. Be sure you return not railing, reproaching, or reviling, for reviling, for it doth but kindle more heat, and you will find silence, or, at least, very gentle words, the most exquisite revenge of reproaches that can be;

be; for either it will cure the distemper in the other, and make him see and be sorry for his passion, or it will torment him with more perturbation and disturbance. But howsoever, it keeps your innocence, gives you deserved reputation of wisdom and moderation, and keeps up the serenity and composure of your mind; whereas passion and anger do make a man unfit for any thing that becomes him, as a man, or as a Christian.

8. Some men are excellent in knowledge of husbandry, some of planting, some of gardening, some in the mathematics, some in one kind; some in another: in all your conversation, learn as near as you can, wherein the skill and excellence of any person lies, and put him upon talk of that subject, and observe it, and keep it in memory, or

E 2

writing:

writing: by this means, you will glean up the worth and excellence of every person you meet with, and at an easy rate put together that which may be for your use upon all occasions.

9. Converſe not with a liar or a ſwearer, or a man of obſcene and wanton language; for either he will corrupt you, or at leaſt it will hazard your reputation to be one of the like making; and, if it do neither, yet will fill your memory with ſuch diſcourſes, that will be troubleſome to you in after-time, and the returns of the remembrance of the paſſages which you long ſince heard of this nature, will haunt you when your thoughts ſhould be better employed.

2d. Now

2d. Now as concerning your own speech, and how you are to manage it; something may be collected out of what goes before, but I shall add some things else.

1. Let your speech be true; never speak any thing for a truth, which you know, or believe, to be false; it is a great sin against God, that gave you a tongue to speak your mind, and not to speak a lie; it is a great offence against humanity itself, for where there is no truth, there can be no safe society between man and man; and it is an injury to the speaker; for besides the base disreputation it casts upon him, it doth in time bring a man to that baseness of mind, that he can scarce tell how to tell truth, or to avoid lying, even when he hath no colour of necessity for it; and in time he comes to such a pass, that as

another man cannot believe he tells a truth, so he himself scarce knows when he tells a lie; and, observe it, a lie ever returns with discovery and shame at the last.

2. As you must be careful not to lie, so you must avoid coming near it: you must not equivocate; you must not speak that absolutely, which you have but by hearsay, or relation; you must not speak that as upon knowledge, which you have but by conjecture or opinion only.

3. Let your words be few, especially when your betters, or strangers, or men of more experience or understanding, are in place; for you do yourself at once two great mischiefs. 1. You betray and discover your own weakness and folly. 2. You rob yourself of that opportunity

tunity which you might otherwise have to gain knowledge, wisdom, and experience, by hearing those that you silence by your impertinent talking.

4. Be not over earnest, loud, or violent in talking, for it is unseemly; and earnest and loud talking makes you overshoot and lose your business; when you should be considering and pondering your thoughts, and how to express them significantly, to the purpose, you are striving to keep your tongue going, and to silence your opponent, not with reason, but with noise.

5. Be careful not to interrupt another in his talk; hear him out, you will understand him the better, and be able to give him the better answer; it may be, if you will give him leave, he will say

E 4

somewhat

somewhat more than you have yet heard, or well understood, or that which you did not expect.

6. Always before you speak, especially where the business is of moment, consider before hand, weigh the sense in your mind, which you intend to utter; think upon the expressions you intend to use, that they be significant, pertinent, and inoffensive; and whereas it is the ordinary course of inconsiderate persons to speak their words, and then to think, or not to think till they speak; think first, and speak after, if it be in any matter of moment or seriousness.

7. Be willing to speak well of the absent, if you do not know they deserve ill: by this means you shall make yourself many friends; and sometimes an undeserved

deserved commendation is not lost to the party to whom it is given: I have known some men, that have met with an undeserved commendation, out of shame of being worse than they have been reported, secretly to make up practices answerable to their commendation, and so to make themselves as good as they are reported.

8. Be sure you give not an ill report to any that you are not sure deserves it; and in most cases, though a man deserves ill, yet you should be very sparing to report him so: in some cases indeed you are bound, in honesty and justice, to give that account concerning the demerit or default of a person that he deserves; as, namely, when you are called to give testimony for the ending of a controversy, or when the concealing of

it may harden and encourage a person in an evil way, or bring another into danger; in such cases, the very duty of charity binds you to speak your knowledge; nay, your probable fear or suspicion of such a person, so it be done for prevention of greater inconvenience, and in love, and especially the discovery be made to a person that hath a superintendence, care, or authority over the person complained of; for this is an act of love and duty. But for any person, maliciously, busily, and with intent to scandalize another, to be whispering tales and stories to the prejudice of another, this is a fault; if you know any good of any person, speak it as you have opportunity; if you know any evil, speak it, if it be really and prudently done, for the good of him, and the safety of others; otherwise rather choose to say nothing, than to say any thing reproachfully,

fully, maliciously, or officiously, to his prejudice.

9. Avoid swearing in your ordinary communication, unless called to it by the magistrate, and not only the grosser oaths, but the lesser; and not only oaths, but imprecations, earnest and deep protestations: as you have the commendable example of good men to justify a solemn oath before a magistrate, so you have the precept of our Saviour forbidding it otherwise.

10. Avoid scoffing, and bitter and biting jeering, and jesting, especially at your friends condition, credit, deformity, or natural defects of any person; for these leave a deep impression, and are a most apparent injustice; were you so used, you would take it inwardly amiss; and many times such an injury

costs a man dear when he little thinks of it.

ii. Be very careful, that you give no reproachful, bitter, menacing or spiteful words to any person; nay, not to servants, or other persons of an inferior condition; and that upon these considerations. 1. There is not the meanest person but you may stand in need of him in one kind, or at some time or other; good words make friends, bad words make enemies: it is the best prudence in the world to make as many friends as you honestly can, especially when it may be done at so easy a rate as a good word; and it is the greatest folly that can be to make an enemy by ill words, which do not at all any good to the party that useth them. 2. Ill words provoke ill words again, and commonly such ill words as are gained by

by such a provocation, especially of an inferior, stick closer, and wound deeper, than such as come unprovoked by ill language, or from an equal. 3. Where faults are committed, they may, and by a superior, must be reprov'd; but let it be done without reproaches, or bitterness, otherwise it loseth its due end and use, and instead of reforming the offence, exasperates the offender, and makes him worse, and gives him the cudgel to strike again, because it discovers your own weakness when you are reprehending another, and lays you justly open to his reproof, and makes your own but scorn'd and disesteem'd: I press this the rather, because most ordinarily ill language is the folly of children, and of weak and passionate people.

12. If there be occasion for you to speak in any company, always be careful,

ful, if you speak at all, to speak latest, especially if strangers are in company; for by this means, you will have the advantage of knowing the sense, judgment, temper, and relations of others, which may be a great light and help to you, in ordering your speech; and you will better know the inclination of the company, and speak with more advantage and acceptation, and with more security against giving offence.

13. Be careful, that you commend not yourselves: it is the most unuseful and ungrateful thing that can be; you should avoid flattering of yourselves, it is a sign your reputation is small and sinking, if your own tongues must be your flatterers or commenders; it is a fulsome and unpleasant thing for others to hear it.

14. Abhor

14. Abhor all foul, unclean, and obscene speeches; it is a sign that the heart is corrupt, and such kind of speeches will make it worse; it will taint, and corrupt yourselves, and those that hear it, and brings disreputation to those that use it.

15. Never use any prophane speeches, nor make jests of scripture expressions; when you use the names of *God*, or of *Christ*, or any passages or words of the holy scripture, use them with reverence and seriousness, and not lightly, vainly, or scurrilously, for it is taking the name of God in vain.

16. If you hear of any unseemly expressions used in religious exercises, you must be careful to forget, and not to publish

publish, or if you at all mention them, let it be with pity and sorrow, not with derision or reproach.

17. Do not upbraid any, or deride any man for a pious, strict, and religious conversation; for if he be sincere, you dishonour God and injure him; if he be an hypocrite, yet it is more than you know, or if you know him to be such, yet his external piety and strictness is not his fault, but his dissimulation and hypocrisy; and though his hypocrisy be to be detested, his external piety and religion is to be commended, not derided.

18. Have as little conversation as possible with *obstinate* heretics, or persons *obstinately* perverted in matters of religion; as Papists, Quakers, Anabaptists,

baptists, Antinomians, Enthusiasts, and the like; but especially converse not with them in matters of religion, for instead of converting them by your persuasions to the truth, you shall but harden them the more, and endanger yourself: they are to be dealt withal, in these matters, only by persons of great abilities: for a perverted, corrupted mind, and obstinate spirit, carries in it a contagion, as infectious, and much more dangerous, than the plague in the body, where their opinions meet with a young and weak opponent.

And thus, Children, at the time, and my remembrance would give me leave, I have set down some observations concerning this subject, for your direction and practice; what is wanting you may abundantly supply, by reading the wise counsels

counsels of Solomon, in his book of Proverbs.

Read these my directions often, think of them seriously, and practice them diligently : though they seem but dry, and ordinary things, yet you will find them useful in your conversation, which will be every day more evident to you, as your judgment, understanding, and experience increase.

I have but little more to write at this time, but to wish and command you to remember my former counsels that I have often given you : begin and end the day with private prayers to God, upon your knees, read the scriptures often and seriously, be attentive to the public worship of God in the church : keep yourselves

selves still in some good employment, for idleness is the devil's opportunity, and the nursery of vain and sinful thoughts, which corrupt the mind, and disorder the life. Let the girls take care of such business of my family, as is proper for them: and their recreations may be, walking abroad in the fields, in fair or frosty mornings, some work with their needle, reading, setting of flowers, practising their music, and such innocent and harmless exercises: let the boys be diligent at their books, and when they have performed their tasks, I do not deny them such recreations, as may be healthy, safe, and harmless. Be you all kind and loving one to another, honouring your minister, not bitter or harsh to my servants, be respectful to all, bear my absence patiently, cheerfully, and faithfully; do all things as if

I

I were present among you, and beheld you, for you have a greater father than I am, that always, and in all places, beholds you, and knows your hearts and thoughts: study to requite the love, and care, and expence of your father for you, with dutifulness, observance, and obedience to him: and account it an honour, that God hath given you an opportunity in my absence, by your care, faithfulness, and industry, to pay some part of that debt, that by the laws of nature and gratitude you owe unto me: be frugal in my family, but let there be no want; provide conveniently for the poor that come to my door. And I pray God to fill all your hearts with his grace, fear, and love; and let you see the advantage and comfort of serving him; and that his blessing, and presence,
and

and comfort, and direction, and providence be with you, and over you all.

I am,

Your ever loving Father,

MATTHEW HALE.

EPISTLE



EPISTLE THE THIRD.

*To one of his Sons after his Recovery from
the Small Pox.*

SON,

ALTHOUGH, by reason of the
contagiousness of your disease,
and the many dependents I have upon
me, I thought it not convenient to come
unto you, during your sickness, yet I have
not been wanting in my earnest prayers
to Almighty God for you, nor in using
the best means I could for your reco-
very.

It hath pleased God to hear my pray-
ers for you, and, above means and hopes,
now

now to restore you to a competent degree of health, for which I return unto him my humble and hearty thanks ; and now you are almost ready to come abroad again ; therefore I have thought fit to write this little book to you, for these reasons : 1. Because it is not yet seasonable for you to come to me, in respect of these same reasons abovementioned, which hitherto have restrained my coming to you. 2. Because at your coming abroad, you will be subject to temptations by young and inconsiderate company, which, instead of serious thankfulness to God for his mercy to you, might perchance persuade you to a vain and light jollity : and I thought fit to send you these lines to prevent such inconsiderate impressions, and to meet you just at your coming abroad, to season you with more wise and serious principles. 3. Because you are even
now

now come out of a great and fore visitation; and, therefore, in all probability, in the fittest temper to receive the impressions of a serious epistle from your father.

And I have chosen to put it into this little volume, because it is somewhat too long for a letter; and may be better preserved for your future use and memory.

God Almighty hath brought you to the very gates of death, and shewed you the terror and danger of it; and after that he hath shewn you this spectacle of your own mortality, he hath marvelously rescued and delivered you from that danger, and given you life, even from the dead, so that you are as a man new born into the world, or returned to

F

life

life again, which now you seem as it were to begin: you have passed through those two great dispensations of Divine Providence, those two great experiments, that God is pleased to use sometimes towards the children of men: namely, correction, and deliverance, his rod and staff: and therefore, in all reasonable conjecture, this is the most seasonable time to give you a lecture upon both, and those admonitions which may render the one and the other profitable to you: and this I shall endeavour to do in these following lines.

1. You shall not need to fear that I intend to upbraid you with the errors of your youth, or to expostulate with you touching them; for I do assure you I do from my heart forgive you all your follies and miscarriages; and I do assure myself that you have repented of them, and

re-

resolved against them for the time to come, and that thereupon God Almighty hath also fully forgiven what is past; and this is a great assurance thereof to me, in that he hath so wonderfully restored you, and given you, as it were, a new life, wherein you may obey and serve him better than ever you yet did; and therefore, if in this letter there be any touches concerning former vanities, assure yourself they are not angry repetitions, but only necessary cautions for your future ordering of your life.

The business of these papers is principally to commend unto you two general remembrances, and certain results and collections that arise from them; they are all seasonable for your present condition, and will be of singular use and benefit to you, in the whole ensuing course of your life.

1. I would have you, as long as you live, remember your late sickness in all its circumstances, and these plain and profitable inferences and advices that arise from it.

2. I would have you remember, as long as you live, your great deliverance, and the several circumstances of it, and those necessary duties that are incumbent upon you in relation thereunto.

It is evident to daily experience, that while afflictions are upon us, and while deliverances are fresh, they commonly have some good effect upon us; but as the iron is no sooner out of the fire, but it quickly returns to its coldness, and hardness; so when the affliction or deliverance is past, we usually forget them, count them common things, attribute them to means and second causes; and
so

so the good that mankind should gather from them vanishes, and men grow quickly to be but what they were before they came; their sick-bed promises are forgot when the sickness is over.

And therefore I shall give you an account of your sickness, and of your recovery: and let them never be forgotten by you; as often as those spots and marks in your face are reflected to your view from the glass, as often as this paper comes in your sight, nay, as often as you open your eyes from sleep, which were once closed, and likely never to open again, so often, and more often remember your sickness, and your recovery, and the admonitions that this paper lends you from the consideration of both. ,



F 3

I. There-

1. Therefore, touching your late sickness, I would have you remember these particulars. 1. The disease itself, in its own nature, is now become ordinarily very mortal, especially to those of your age; look upon even the last year's general bill of mortality, you will find near 2000 died * of that disease the last year, and had not God been very very merciful to you, you might have been one of that number with as great likelihood as any of them that died of that disease. 2. It was a contagious disease, that secluded the access of your nearest relations. 3. Your sickness rendered you noisome to yourself, and to all that were about you, and a spectacle full of

* Inoculation was not introduced into England at that time: This salutary invention was brought from Turkey about 1721, by Lady W. Montague, and first tried on criminals.—EDITOR.

deformity,

deformity, by the excess of your disease beyond most that are sick thereof. 4. It was a fierce and violent sickness : it did not only take away the common supplies of nature, as digestion, sleep, strength, but it took away your memory, your understanding, and the very sense of your condition, or what might be conducive to your good ; all that you could do, was only to make your condition more desperate in case they that were about you had prevented it, and taken more care for you than you did or could for yourself. 5. Your sickness was desperate, inasmuch that your symptoms, and the violence of your distemper, were without example ; and you were in the next degree to absolute rottenness, putrefaction, and death itself.

Look upon the foregoing description,
and remember that such was your condi-

tion; you were as sad a picture of mortality and corruption, as any thing, but death itself, could make: remember it; and remember also these ensuing instructions, that may make that remembrance profitable and useful to you.

1. Remember that "*Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, nor doth trouble spring out of the ground.*" Job v. 6. But this terrible visitation was sent to you from the wise over-ruling providence of God; it is he that bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up again. It is true, that this disease may seem common, but you may, and must know that there was more than the common hand of God in sending it upon you, in such a manner, and such a measure, and at such a season, when you were grown up to a competent age and degree of understanding,

derstanding, to make a due use of it, that you might see his justice in afflicting you, and his goodness in delivering you from such danger.

2. Remember that Almighty God is of most infinite wisdom, justice, and mercy; he hath excellent ends in all his dispensations of his providence: he never sends an affliction, but it brings a message with it; his rod has a voice commanding us to search and try our ways, and to examine ourselves whether there hath not been some great sin against him, or neglect of duty to him; a voice commanding us to repent of what is amiss, to be more watchful, circumspect, and obedient to him; in the future course of our lives to fear to offend him: and if a man hear this voice, God hath his end of mercy

and goodness; and man hath the fruit, benefit, and advantage of his affliction, and commonly a comfortable issue of it; read often and attentively the 33^d Job, from beginning to the end.

3. Remember how uncertain and frail a creature man is, even in his seeming strangest age and constitution of health; even then a pestilential air, some evil humour in his blood, some obstruction, it may be, of a little vein, or artery, a little meat ill-digested, and a thousand small occurrences may, upon a sudden, without any considerable warning, plunge a man into a desperate and mortal sickness, and bring a man to the grave. Remember this terrible sickness seized upon you suddenly, pulled down your strength quickly, and brought you to the very brink of the grave: and though
God

God hath recovered you, you know not how soon you may be brought into the like condition.

4. Remember therefore, that you make and keep peace with God, and walk in his fear in the days of health, especially after so great a deliverance; and that for many reasons.

1. You know not whether you may not be overtaken with sudden death, and then it will be impossible for you to begin that work. 2. If you have sickness to give you warning of the approach of death, yet you know not whether that sickness may not suddenly take away your senses, memory, understanding, whereby you may be disabled to make your peace with God, or to exercise any serious thoughts about it. 3. But if that sickness give you fair warning, and take not away your un-

F 6

derstanding,

derstanding, yet your own experience cannot choose but to let you know, that pain, and weaknes, and distraction of mind, and impatience, and unquietness, are the common attendants of a sick bed, and render that season, at least, very difficult then to begin that greatest, and solemnest, and most important business of a man's life. 4. But if your sickness be not so sharp, but that it leaves you patience, and attention of mind for that great business, how do you know whether your heart shall be inclined to it? Repentance and conversion to God is his gift, though it must be our endeavour: and though the merciful God never refuseth a repenting, returning offender; yet, how can a man that, all the time of his health, hath neglected Almighty God, refused his invitations, and served his lusts and his sin, expect reasonably, that God in the time
of

of sickness, when the man can serve his sins no longer, will give him the grace of repentance?

Whatever you do, therefore, be sure you make peace with God, and keep it in the days of your health, especially after so great a deliverance from so desperate a sickness.

5. Remember your condition is never so low, but that God hath power to deliver you, and therefore trust in him: but remember withal, that your condition is never safe and secure, but you are within the reach of his power to bring you down. You are now, by the mercy of God, recovered from a terrible sickness; think not with yourself that your turn is now served, and that you shall have no more need of him, and there-

therefore that you may live as you list, and never regard your duty to him; deceive not yourself herein; remember that this sickness, within two or three days, brought you upon your knees even from a seeming state of health: the case is the same still, nay much worse, if this affliction make you not better; Almighty God called you to love, and serve, and obey him, by the still voice of his word, by the persuasion of your friends, by the advices and reproofs of your father: and when these were not so effectual, as I know you now wish they had been, he sent a messenger that speaks louder, that would be heard, even this terrible sickness; and most certainly, if you have heard the voice of this rod, as I am hopeful you have, and thereupon intirely turned to your duty to God in all sincerity and obedience,

ence, it is the happiest providence that ever befel you; and you will, upon found conviction, conclude with the Prophet, "*It was good for me that I was afflicted.*" But on the other side, if notwithstanding this voice of the rod, you shall after your recovery return again to folly, and vanity, and excess, and harden yourself against this messenger; know for certain, you are within the reach of the divine justice and power; and if you walk contrary to him, he will walk contrary to you, "and punish you yet seven times for your sins." Levit.—Therefore I give you that counsel that our Lord gave to him that he had healed, "Behold thou art made whole, go thy way and sin no more, least a worse thing befall thee." There is no contesting with Almighty God; he is ready and easy to be reconciled to the
worst

worst of men, upon humiliation and true repentance, but he is not to be mastered or conquered by obstinacy and opposition: "*Who hath hardened himself against him and prospered?*" Job ix. 5.

6. I would have you remember, that sickness, as well as death, doth undeceive mankind, and shews them where their true wisdom lies; when a young man especially is in the full career of his vanity and pleasure, he thinks that religion, and the fear of God, and walking according to his word, and the serious practice of duties and religion towards God, prayer unto him, making our peace with him, are pitiful, low, foolish, and inconsiderable matters; and that those that practise them are a sort of brain-sick, melancholy, unintelligent persons,

persons, that want wit, or breeding, and understand not themselves or the world, that they are meer empty fancies and imaginations, whimsies, puritanism, and I know not what else; but on the other side, they think they are brave men that live splendidly, deny themselves no pleasure, can drink, and roar, and whore, and debauch, and wear the new fashions; it may be, this gallant or wise man comes to be taken with a fit of sickness that tells him he must die, death is at his door, his glass is almost out, and but a few sands left in it; and then the man becomes quite of another judgment, he cries out of his former foolishness, he finds his pleasures, and intemperance, and excess, are not only perfect follies, but madness, vexation, torment: and religion, and prayer to God, and devotion, and peace with God, they are now in request; and so now nothing but

but declamations against those courses, which in his health he valued as the only wisdom: and nothing but promises of amendment, and reformation of life, and devotion to God; so sickness hath undeceived the man, and given him a true and rectified judgment concerning wisdom and folly, quite contrary to what he had before. Therefore I would have you to recollect yourself, and if the violence of your disease left you at any time the use of your reason, bethink yourself what opinion you then had of intemperance, wasting of time, unlawful lust, or any of those sins that formerly pleased you in your health, whether they did not appear to you in your sickness very vain, foolish, vexing things, such as you wished never to have been committed: and on the other side, what opinion you had in your sickness touching piety towards God, hearing of his word, calling
upon

upon his name, redeeming of time, modesty, temperance: whether those actions of your life past, that favoured of these, were not comfortable, and contenting to you in your sickness; whether your purposes, and promises, and resolutions of your sick bed, were not full of such thoughts as these: If it please God to recover me, I will never be such a fool as I have been: I will never drink to excess, mispend my time; I will never keep such evil company as I have done; I will be more devout towards God, more obedient to his word, more observant of good counsel; and the like: and if you find it to be so, I must desire you to remember, that affliction is the school of wisdom, it rectifies men's judgments; and I must again desire you to keep your judgment right still, and let not the recovery of your health become the loss of your wits; but in your health retain
that

that wisdom your sickness taught you,
and practise what you then promised :
“ *Remember he is the wisest man that provideth for his latter end.*”

7. Remember by your former sickness, how pitiful an inconsiderable thing the body of man is ; how soon is the strength of it turned to faintness, and weakness, and the beauty of it to ugliness and deformity, the consistency of it to putrefaction and rottenness? and then remember how foolish a thing it is, to be proud of such a carcase, to spend all, or the greatest part of our time in trimming or adorning it : in studying new fashions, and devices, to set it out ; in spending out time and provisions in pampering it, in pleasing the appetite ; and yet this is the chief business of most young men of this age : learn therefore humility and lowliness ; learn to furnish
thy

thy noble and immortal part, thy soul, with religion, grace, knowledge, virtue, goodness, for that will retain it to eternity. How miserable is that man's condition, that, whilst sickness has made his body a deformed, weak, loathsome thing, sin hath made his soul as ugly and deformed: the grave will heal or cover the deformity of the former, but the soul will carry its ulcers and deformity, without repentance, into the next world: learn and remember, therefore, to have thy greatest care for thy noblest part, furnish it with piety, grace, knowledge, the fear and love of God, faith in Christ: and as for thy body, use it decently, soberly, and comely, that it may be a fit instrument for thy soul to use in this life; but be not proud of it, nor make it thy chiefest care and business to adorn, much less to defile it.

8. Remem-

8. Remember to avoid intemperance and sinful lusts; it is true, sickness and diseases, and, finally, death, are by the laws and constitutions of our nature, incident to all mankind: but intemperance, excess of eating and drinking, drunkenness, whoring, uncleanness, and disorder, bring more diseases, especially upon young men, and destroy more young, strong, healthy men, than the plague, or other natural, or accidental distempers; they weaken the brain, corrupt the blood, decay and distemper the spirit, disorder and putrify the humours, and make the body a very bag full of putrefaction; some diseases are, as it were, specific, and appropriate to these vices; other diseases are commonly occasioned by them, by their inflammation and putrefaction of the blood and humours: and all diseases, even those that are epidemical, natural, or casual,

casual, yet are rendered by those vices far more sharp, lasting, malignant, and incurable, by that stock of corrupted matter that lodges in the body, to feed those diseases, and that impotency that these vices bring upon nature to resist them; therefore if ever you expect to have, as well a sound body, as a sound mind, carefully avoid intemperance and debauchery; the most temperate and sober persons are subject to sickness, weakness, and diseases, but the intemperate can never be long without them.

And thus I have done with the prospect of your disease, and at least many of those profitable uses you may gather from the remembrance of it.

2. I shall now, in the second place, put you in remembrance of your deliverance;

liverance; touching which you must remember, 1. That it was a great, eminent, and extraordinary deliverance; you need no other evidence of it, than by looking back upon the greatness and severity of your disease before-mentioned. 2. It was a deliverance by the immediate power and mercy of that God that sent you the visitation.

Una eademque manus vulnus opemque tulit. If you had been delivered by the immediate efficacy of means, yet you are blind if you see not, that the efficacy of means depends upon the providence of God; it is he that provides it, and that makes the means effectual. But in this deliverance, God hath pleased to hedge up, as it were, your way from attributing it to means, and hath given you an indication, that it was done by his own immediate power, and that he delivered
you

you above, and beyond means. It is true, you had a very able and careful physician, and very great attendance and care was used about you : but when your physician, and all that were about you, began to despair of your recovery ; when means proved ineffectual ; when the strength of nature was exhausted and baffled by your disease ; God Almighty, upon a sudden, and beyond expectation, relieved you ; and, as it were by his own hand, brought you back from the very threshold of the grave : and thus he did, that you, and all about you, and all your relations might take notice of it, that it was he that did it.

And thus Almighty God hath exercised towards you, two great experiments ; the first of his severity ; the second of his mercy ; and as your sick-

G

ness

ness and rod had its voice, a loud and sharp voice, for your recovery and deliverance hath its voice, and I will, as shortly as I can, tell you what it is.

1. Remember this benefit; remember it was reached out unto you, from the mere power, goodness, and mercy of God: remember evermore, in your heart and soul, to be thankful to him for it: remember, as long as you live, upon all occasions, to acknowledge it; daily to return upon your knees humble thanks for it, to him that had regard to you, and remembered you in your low estate; to him that forgave your iniquities, and healed your disease; to him that did this for you, when all means failed; that did it for you, when you had not the understanding to call upon him for it; to him that did it for you, that deserved it not, for you
that

that had provoked him, and neglected him in the time of your health. This God it was that delivered you; read often the 103d Psalm attentively, and apply it to your condition, it will do you good.

2. Remember to acknowledge this goodness of God with all humility; your deliverance was not the purchase of your own power, nor of your own desert, it was an act of the free undeserved goodness of God. What Almighty God said by Moses unto the Israelites, Deut. ix. 4, 6, I shall say to you, with some variation;—Understand therefore that the Lord thy God hath not given thee this deliverance for thy righteousness; no, it is the mere effect of his own goodness, and to give you opportunity to praise him, and

serve him better than ever you did before.

3. Remember, that although great deliverances require your great acknowledgments, yet there is somewhat more required; namely, a real, practical glorifying of God, by ordering your conversation aright, by serving him, pleasing him, obeying him, living to his honour: this Almighty God expects, as well as praises, and acknowledgments; as the end of God in afflictions is to make men better, so the end of God in deliverances is to make men better; and if we are not the better men by both dispensations, we do, as much as in us lies, disappoint Almighty God in his design, and disappoint ourselves of the benefit and advantage intended in both, and easily to be gained by both. This therefore is the voice
of

of this deliverance, it calls sweetly, and gently indeed, but earnestly, and effectually for amendment of life, and that upon two great and moving arguments.

1. Your recovery, and great deliverance, calls for this from you, upon the account of common ingenuity and good nature, which obligeth a man to be observant and dutiful to his benefactor: God Almighty is the greatest benefactor, and hath manifested himself such to you, upon a visible eminent account; this is engagement enough, upon the account of common humanity, to be dutiful and obedient to him; when therefore you are at any time, by the temptation of your own corruption, or by the sollicitation of evil persons, solicited to evil actions, consider thus with yourself;—is this a becoming return to that God, that hath thus wonderfully delivered me? is this

the requital that I shall make unto him for his mercy? shall I please the great God of heaven and earth, that hath thus delivered me, and done me more good than all the world could ever do me, or than I can ever recompense? "*Do ye thus requite the Lord, O ye foolish people, and unwise? hath he not made thee, and established thee?*" Deut. 33.

2. This his mercy calls for your obedience to God in an eminent manner upon the account of common prudence and discretion; the benefit of your obedience to him will be your own, your own happiness in this life, and in that to come; there is no greater moral security against future dangers and troubles, than obedience and reformation of life, upon great deliverances received; nor is there any greater invitation of new troubles and mischiefs than ingratitude, disobedience.

disobedience, and great sins after great mercies and deliverances; there is a kind of certain and infallible connection, between great sins, after great mercies received, and great judgments to follow; *Ingentia, beneficia, ingentia peccata supplicia.*

Again, as I have formerly told you, you do not know how soon you may stand in need of the same mercy and goodness of God, which you have formerly found; you are never out of the reach of his power, and the necessity of his help; whatever you do, therefore, never disoblige him by whom you live, and whose extraordinary mercy you may stand in need of, you know not how soon; there is nothing in the world doth more provoke God than neglect, forgetfulness, or wilful disobedience after signal mercies; these provoke the merciful God to a severity of the highest kind, because

the sweetest and most obliging call of mercy and deliverance is neglected; read the first chapter of the Proverbs attentively. And the merciful God hath given us a plain rule and method, how he may be served, obeyed, and pleased; he hath given us a plain discovery of his will in the scriptures of both testaments; read that often, you have it by you, and you need not go far to find what is your Maker's will, and what that obedience is that he requires, as the return of this, and all other his mercies; yet I think it not amiss to mind you of some particulars, that may be useful for you upon this occasion, and to direct you how particularly to improve it, and so order your future life in some measure answerable to it.

1. I would have you make it your first business, after your recovery, to consider the course of your life past, since
you

you came to the age of discretion, and see what hath been amiss in it; whether you have not neglected religion, and the duties of it, too much, as prayer, hearing the word preached, observing the Lord's day, receiving the sacrament; whether you have not been guilty of intemperance, excess of drinking, wantonness, uncleanness, idleness, mispending your time, and those supplies which have been allowed for your maintenance; whether you have not too much delighted in vain, and sinful, and disorderly company, vanity and expence in apparel; and if such, or the like faults have been, repent of them, be sorry for them, resolve against them; and let the future course of your life be amended in relation thereunto. I have before told you, that your heavenly father hath forgiven you, and I have forgiven you, neither do I mention those things to upbraid you for them, but that

you, upon the consideration of what hath been amiss, may be thereby the better enabled to rectify and set in order your future life; if this be done and practised, I will reckon your late sickness and distemper one of the greatest blessings that ever befel you.

2. I would have you always keep a habit of the fear of God upon your heart; consider his presence, order your life as in his presence; consider that he always sees you, beholds and takes notice of you, and especially whether you carry yourself answerable to this great deliverance: it is one of those talents for which he will expect an account from you.

3. I would have you frequently and thankfully consider of the great love of God in Jesus Christ, whom he hath given to be the instructor and governor, and
sacrifice

sacrifice of the sins of you and all mankind: through whom, upon repentance, you have assurance of the remission of your sins, and eternal life: and frequently consider how great an engagement this is upon you, and all mankind, to live according to such a hope, and such a mercy.

4. I would have you every morning read a portion of the holy scriptures, till you have read the bible from the beginning to the end: observe it well, read it reverently and attentively, set your heart upon it, and lay it up in your memory, and make it the direction of your life; it will make you a wise and good man: I have been acquainted somewhat with men and books, and have had long experience in learning, and in the world: There is no book like the bible for excellent learning, wisdom, and use; and

it is the want of understanding in them, that think or speak otherwise.

5. Every morning and every evening, upon your knees, with all reverence and attention of mind, return hearty thanks to God for his mercy to you, and particularly for this deliverance; desire his grace to enable you to walk in some measure answerable to it; beg his providence to protect you, his grace to direct you, to keep you from evil actions, and evil persons, and evil occurrences; beg his pardon for your sins, and the continuance of his favour; always concluding with the Lord's prayer.

6. Observe conscientiously the Lord's day to keep it holy; avoid idle company, idle discourse, recreations, and secular employments upon that day; resort that day twice to the public prayers and sermon;

mon; go early to it, be attentive at it, and keep your eyes and mind from roving after vain thoughts or objects; spend the rest of that day, that is free from necessary occasions, in reading the scriptures, or some good books of divinity.

7. Once every term, at least, come preparedly and reverently to the holy communion, receive it with great reverence and thankfulness, and due consideration to the end of its institution; renew your covenant with Almighty God, that you made in baptism, and live soberly, righteously, and godly before him, and beg his grace and strength to perform it.

And as those directions before, do more especially relate to Almighty God, and your deportment immediately towards him; so these that follow, more especially

especially relate to yourself and others, and your moral conversation. Therefore,

8. Be very moderate in eating and drinking; drunkenness is the great vice of the time; and by drunkenness, I do mean, not only gross drunkenness, but also tipling, drinking excessively or immoderately, or more than is convenient, and necessary: avoid those companies that are given to it; come not into those places that are devoted to that beastly vice, namely, taverns and alehouses; avoid and refuse those devices that are used to occasion it, as drinking and pledging of healths: be resolute against it, and when your resolution is once known, you will never be solicited to it. The Rechabites were commanded by their father not to drink wine, and they obeyed it, and had a blessing for it: my
com-

command to you is not so strict; I allow you the moderate use of wine and strong drink at your meals; I only forbid you excess, or the unnecessary use of it, and those places and companies, and artifices that are temptations to it.

9. Avoid wanton and lascivious actions, speeches, and company: read Proverbs 2, 5, 6, 7, 9. A whore hunts for the precious life of a man, and that vice brings a ruin with it to the soul, body, and estate: if you cannot conveniently contain yourself in a single life, and be of competent health, marry, but with the advice and counsel of your father while he lives.

10. Be frugal of your time, it is one of the best jewels we have; and to that end avoid idleness, it consumes your time, and lays you open to worse inconveniences;

veniences; let your recreations be healthy, and creditable, and moderate, without too much expence of time or money; go not to plays, they are wasting of time; value time by that estimate we would have of it, when we want it; what would not a sick man give for those portions of time, of health, that he had formerly improvidently wasted?

11. Be diligent in your study and calling; it is an act of duty to Almighty God that requires it, and it will be your wisdom and benefit; it will be a good expence of time, a prevention from a thousand inconveniences and temptations that otherwise will befall man; it will furnish you with knowledge and understanding, give you the advantage and means of a comfortable and plentiful subsistence, and make you a support,
comfort,

comfort, and benefit to your friends and country.

12. Be frugal in your expences; live within the compass of that exhibition that God's providence, and your father's abilities shall supply you withal; it is enough to maintain an honest provident man, and ten times more will not be enough to a profuse mind; a frugal man will live comfortably, and plentifully upon a little, and a profuse man will live beggarly, necessitously, and in continual want, whatever his supplies be.

13. In all your expences, consider before hand; can I not be well enough without this that I am about to buy? is there an absolute necessity for it? can I not forbear till I am in a better condition to compass it? if I buy or borrow, can I pay? and when? and am I sure?

sure? will this expence hold out? how shall I bring about the next quarter, or the next year? If young men would but have the patience to consider, and ask themselves questions of the like nature, it would make them considerate in their expences, provident for the future; and these considerations will, in an especial manner, concern you, in respect of your father's great expences for you, which though I have forgiven, and forgotten, I would have you remember with gratitude and caution.

14. The vanity of young men in loving fine cloaths, and new fashions, and valuing themselves by them, is one of the most childish pieces of folly that can be, and the occasion of great profuseness and undoing of young men: avoid curiosity and too much expensiveness in your apparel; be comely, plain, decent,

decent, cleanly, not curious or costly ; it is the sign of a weak head-piece to be sick for every new fashion, or to think himself the better in it, or the worse without it.

15. Be careful what company you consort with, and much more careful what persons you grow intimate with ; choose sober, wise, learned, honest, religious company ; you will gain learning and wisdom, and improve yourself in learning and goodness by conversing with them : but avoid debauched, foolish, intemperate, prodigal, atheistical, profane company, as you would avoid the plague ; they will corrupt and undo you ; they are a sort of the most pitiful fools in the world, and familiar acquaintance and conversation with them, will endanger to make you like them.

16. Weigh

16. Weigh and consider your words before you speak them, and do not talk at random, or at a venture; let your words be few, and to the purpose; be more ready to hear others, than to speak yourself; accustom yourself to speak leisurely, and deliberately, it will be a means to make you speak warily and considerately.

17. Be very careful to speak truth, and beware of lying; as lying is displeasing to God, so it is offensive to man, and always, at the latter end, returns to the reproach or disadvantage of him that useth it; it is an evidence of a weak and unmanly mind. Be careful that you believe not hastily strange stories, and be much more careful that you do not report them, though at the second hand; for if it prove an untruth, as commonly strange stories prove so,
it

it brings an imputation of levity upon him that reports it, and possibly some disadvantage to others.

18. Take heed what you promise; see that it be just, and honest, and lawful, and what is in your power, honestly, and certainly to perform: and when you have so promised, be true to your word. It is, for the most part, the fashion of inconsiderate and young men, especially that run in debt; they will, with great asseverations, promise precise payment at this day, or that day, when either they certainly know they cannot perform, or at least have no probable assurance that they can do it; and when their turn is served, they are as backward in their performance, as they were before liberal in their promises. Breach of promises, and lying, are much of a nature,

nature, commonly go together, and are arguments of an impotent and unmanly mind.

19. Beware of gaming; it is the suddenest consumption of an estate that can be, and that vice seldom goes alone; commonly debauchery of all kinds accompanies it: besides it makes a man of a wild, vast, and unsettled mind; and such men are impatient of an honest calling, or of moderate or honest gain.

20. Run not in debt, either for wares sold, or money borrowed; be content to want things that are not of absolute necessity, rather than to run upon the score; such a man pays at the latter end, one third part more than the principal comes to, and is in perpetual servitude to the creditors, lives uncomfortably, is necessitated

fitated to increase his debts, to stop his creditors' mouths, and many times falls into desperate courses.

21. Be respectful to all, familiar and intimate with few, be grateful to your benefactors, especially to those who, under God, were instrumental for your good, in your late sickness, and return your thanks to them; to your father, that spared no cost for your recovery; to your doctor, that was exceedingly diligently about you; to those that attended you in your sickness; to those that, together with your father, often prayed to God for your recovery, and for a blessing upon this affliction, whose names you shall, in due time, particularly know; but, above all, to Almighty God, who not only provided and blessed the means, but saved and delivered you
above

above all means, and when means failed.

22. Lastly, I shall conclude with one advice more, without the observance whereof, my labour in writing this long epistle will be probably fruitless: be not wise in your own conceit; this is the unhappy error, and many times the ruin of young men especially; they are usually rash, giddy, and inconsiderate, and yet extremely confident of that which they have the least reason to trust; namely, their own understanding, which renders them most reserved from them that are willing and best able to advise them, impatient of reproof, love to be flattered, and so become incapable of good and wise counsel, till their follies have reduced them to extreme straits and inconveniences; suspect therefore your own judgment: advise often with your father, especially

especially in all things of moment; be glad of counsel, and be contented and willing to follow it, at least till ripeness of age, observation, and experience have enabled you to advise yourself; this is an easy, and ready, and cheap way of attaining wisdom, and avoiding infinite inconveniences.

And thus I have, in this long epistle, given you the means how you may improve both your own sickness, and recovery, to the glory of God, and your own benefit. I shall therefore conclude with two considerations that may the more engage you to the use of both these dispensations.

1. The danger is great, if afflictions make not a man more humble and dutiful; and the danger is yet greater, if

H

any

any great deliverances and mercies do not make a man more thankful and obedient to God; because it is the most obliging method that the gracious God can use towards the children of men for that end, in this life; and the neglect of that invitation adds ingratitude and contempt to the neglect of it.

2. The benefit that you will receive by making a good use of these two dispensations, in improving your dutifulness and obedience to God, will be singular and excellent. 1. It will make you a wise man, by making you a good and religious man: believe it from your father, who will not deceive you; nay, believe it from a greater than your father, the very spirit of truth, who cannot deceive you; the true fear of God, is the only true wisdom: Read Deut. iv. 6; Job xxviii. 28; Psalm cxi.

10; Prov. i. 7; Prov. ix. 10; Eccles. xii. 13; and very many more declarations there are of this great truth. 2. It will make you a happy man, it will give you the favour and love of God, which is better than life itself: you shall have his mercy to pardon you, his providence to protect you, his wisdom to direct you, his goodness to bless you, and to forgive and forget whatever hath heretofore been done amiss by you: this will make all conditions comfortable to you; whether life or death, sickness or health: by this means you may be a comfort to your father, a support to your brothers and sisters, an instrument of good to your country, and attain an honest, creditable, and competent subsistence in this world, and an everlasting inheritance of glory and immortality in the world to come.

Thus I have given you a large letter of found and good counsel : set your heart to it, and observe and remember it : we see how unstable our lives are ; you nor I know not how soon either, or both of us, may leave this world : it may be this may be the last paper of advice that your father may give you ; but however it shall please God to deal with you or me, touching our continuance in this world, yet let me leave this with you, in the close of this letter ; if I shall find that these directions are dutifully observed, I shall be ready, from time to time, freely to advise and direct you : and as I have passed by your former extravagances, so I shall hereby have great assurance, that God hath blessed this visitation to you. But on the other side, if I shall find that you neglect my counsels, that you make light of them,
that

that you still pursue those courses, that will certainly be bitterness in the end, I must then tell you, I shall pray for you, and be sorry for you with my heart; but I shall not easily be persuaded to give you any more advice, or counsels, where I find them despised or neglected. In this paper there are many things omitted, which might have been inserted; but the constant reading of the holy scriptures, will supply unto you that defect; I have chosen only, in this paper, to mention such things to you as are seasonable on this occasion. God Almighty hath not been wanting to you in admonition, correction, mercy and deliverance; neither hath your father been wanting to you in education, counsel, care and expence; I pray God Almighty to bless all unto you. This is the prayer of

Your loving father,

MATTHEW HALE.

H 3



EPISTLE THE FOURTH.

DIRECTIONS *concerning the keeping*
the LORD's DAY.

ADDRESSED to his CHILDREN.

CHILDREN,

I Sent you formerly divers instructions concerning your speech, and how you should manage it; and being now come well to F*****, from whence I wrote you my former instructions, I intend to write something to you of another subject, viz. your observation of the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday; and this I do for these reasons.

H 4

I. Because

1. Because it hath pleased God to cast my lot so, that I am to rest at this place upon that day, and the consideration therefore of that duty, 'is proper for me and you; it is *Opus diei in die suo*, the work fit and proper for that day.

2. Because I have found, by long and found experience, that the due observance of this day, and of the duties of it, hath been of singular comfort and advantage to me; and I doubt not but it will prove so to you. God Almighty is the Lord of our time, and lends it to us; and it is but just we should consecrate this part of that time to him.

3. Because I find in the world much looseness and apostacy from this duty. People begin to be cold and careless in it, allowing themselves sports and recreations, and secular employments in it,
without

without any necessity, which is a sad spectacle, and an ill presage. It concerns me therefore, (that am your father) as much as I may, to rescue you from that sin which the examples of others, and the inclination and inconsiderateness of youth is otherwise apt to lead you into.

I shall therefore set down to you particularly, (and not in generals only) these things; 1. What is the reason and ground of your observation of this day. 2. What things ought not to be done upon this day which possibly may be lawful upon another day. 3. What things may be done upon this day. 4. What things are either fit or necessary to be done in order to the sanctification of this day.

Touching the first of these, viz. The reason of the observation and sanctifica-

tion of this day : And the reasons are these ;

1. It is a moral duty, that since the glorious God gives me my time, I should consecrate and set apart some portion of that time in a special manner to his service.

2. And because the glorious God best knows what portion of time is fit to be peculiarly dedicated to his service, that so the morality of that time might be determined unto some certainty, he hath by his express precept, given to his ancient people the Jews, limited one day of seven to be that special portion of time, which he would have peculiarly dedicated to his service, and so to conclude ***** into it the morality of that duty.

3. The

3. The seventh portion of time, under the old law given to the Jews, was determined by the precept and command of God, in the fourth command, and likewise by his own example confined to the seventh day from the creation.

4. But our Saviour Christ, who is the son of God, blessed for ever, and is the Lord of the Sabbath, Matt. 12, fulfilling the work of our redemption by his resurrection upon the first day of the week, and by his mission of the Holy Ghost miraculously the first day of the week, and by the secret message of the spirit to the apostles and primitive church, hath translated the observation of the seventh day of the week, to the first day of the week, which is our Christian sabbath.

Concerning the second. It is certain that what is unlawful to be done upon another day, is much more unlawful upon this; as excess and intemperance, and the like sinful and unlawful actions. But further, there are many things that may be lawfully done on another day, which may not lawfully be done upon this; and many things that are not only lawful upon another day, but also fit, and decent, which are yet unfit to be done upon this day. Upon other days we may and must employ ourselves in our secular and ordinary callings; we may use bodily exercises and recreations, as bowling, shooting, hunting, and divers others; we may study human learning: but I hold these to be not only unfit, but unlawful to be used upon this day, and therefore remember it. Moderate walking may thus far be used, so far only, as it enableth you to the more chearful and
lively

lively performance of the duties of this day ; and therefore I allow you to walk soberly, about half an hour after dinner, to digest your meat, that you be not drowsy, nor indisposed in the religious duties of the day. Feasting may be seasonably used sometimes upon other days, but are unfit upon this. Let only such provision be made upon this day, as may be necessary for the family, and the poor ; and therefore I hold that curiosities, baking of meats, and superfluous provisions upon this day are to be avoided, as being an unnecessary breaking of the rest of this day, and unbeseeming the solemnity of it.

Thirdly, What things may be done this day, is a question of great latitude, because circumstances are many, that do much diversify the actions of men, and many times render them lawful or unlawful,

unlawful, according to those varieties of circumstances. Therefore I shall shortly set down those things that do not of themselves directly tend to the sanctification of this day, that yet may, and sometimes must be done upon this day. For there were many things that were strictly enjoined to the Jews in their observation of the sabbath, which were ceremonial, and concerned only that state, and do not oblige under the gospel; as their dressing meat upon this day was prohibited to them, but not to us; and many more things they did forbear and count unlawful, which in truth were not only not forbidden, but enjoined and commanded, for which our Lord reproves the Pharisees, who accounted it a breach of the sabbath to heal the sick, or to pluck the ears of corn for necessary relief of hunger, Matt. 12. Therefore,

1. Works

1. Works of absolute necessity for man or beast may be done upon the Lord's Day. And those I call works of necessity, which cannot be done before this day, or after, without apparent danger. As for instance, stopping of the breach of a sea wall; supporting a house, that upon a sudden tempest, or casualty, is ready to fall; pulling out an ox or other beast fallen into a ditch; preventing of a trespass by a sudden accident that may be occasioned to my corn, or my neighbour's; setting of a broken bone; physic to remove an imminent disease or pain; milking of cows; feeding of cattle; the necessary dressing of meat for the family, and many more instances of that kind. But yet therein, wariness and integrity must be used; for otherwise men, under pretence of necessity, will take the liberty to do what they please. Therefore take these cautions concerning necessity.

1. That

1. That is not a necessity that excuseth a work upon this day, which might have been reasonably foreseen and done before the day: as for instance, a man hath a necessity to dress meat for his family, which he might have provided on the Saturday, and neglects it; this necessity will not justify him in sending two or three miles to buy meat on the Sunday.

2. That is not a necessity which may be forborn to be done without any absolute destruction or loss of the thing, until the morrow. If a rick of hay be on fire, I may endeavour to quench it on the Lord's day: but if my corn be cut, and lying upon the ground on the Saturday, though the weather be rainy, or inclining to wet, I may not make it into cocks, or fetch it home upon the Lord's day; because possibly Almighty God may send fair weather to-morrow. And
therefore

therefore in my forbearance I do two duties under one, viz. Observe his law, and rest upon his providence. Men have necessities many times to serve their ease, and sloth, and fancies, when in truth there is none, but the business may be deferred without any danger. If we would be more faithful in our obedience to God, we should find many pretended necessities to vanish into mere imaginations.

3. Works of charity; relief of the poor; administering physic upon an apparent necessity; visiting or comforting the afflicted; admonishing the disorderly, persuading peace between neighbours offended, and endeavouring to compose differences which require not much examination, or cannot be deferred without an apparent danger of greater mischief. These are not only permitted, but commendable, nay commanded, upon

upon this day. But if the business require examination, or may be deferred till to-morrow, then it is best to defer such examinations and treaties between offended parties till another day; because they will take away too much of the little precious portion of time of this day, and may be as well done to-morrow.

As to the fourth, what is proper, fit, or necessary to be done, in order to the sanctification of this day, I will set down particularly; for generals seldom produce any great effect, because every man is apt to construe them according to his own mind and liking.

1. I would not have you meddle with any recreation, pastimes, or ordinary work of your calling, from Saturday evening to Monday morning.

2. Rise

2. Rise at least three hours before morning sermon; and when you have made yourself full ready, and washed, and fitted yourself for the solemnity of the day, read two chapters in the bible, and then go solemnly to your private prayer, and desire of God his grace to enable you to sanctify his day; and after your private prayer, read another chapter, and let your reading be with attention, observation, and uncovered on your head.

3. When you are in the public worship and service of God, be uncovered all the while of reading, praying, or preaching.

4. Kneel upon your knees at prayer, stand up at the reading of the psalms, and at the first and second lesson, and
the

the epistle and gospel, &c. so you shall avoid offence.

5. Sit at the sermon, and be very attentive at your prayers, and in your hearing. I recommend your writing the sermon, especially till you are one or two and twenty years old, because young minds are apt to wander, and writing the sermon fixeth them, and maketh them more attentive.

6. When the minister readeth any psalms or lessons, turn to them in your bible, and go along with him.

* 7. Be very attentive and serious at church; use no laughing nor gazing about, nor whispering.

8. Sing the psalms with the rest of the congregation.

9. Eat

9. Eat moderately at dinner, rather sparingly than plentifully upon this day, that you may be fit for the afternoon's exercise, without drowsiness or dulness.

10. Walk half an hour after dinner in the garden to digest your meat, then retire to your chamber to "*commune with your own heart,*" until church time.

11. If you are well, be sure to go to church morning and afternoon, and be there before the minister begin, and stay till he hath ended: and all the while you are at church, carry yourself gravely, soberly, and reverently.

12. After evening sermon go up to your chamber, and read a chapter in the bible; then examine what you have written of the sermon.

13. In all your speeches or actions of this day, let there be no lightness nor vanity; but let your actions and speech be such as the day is, serious and sacred, tending to learn or instruct in the great business of your knowledge of God, and his will, and your own duty.

14. After supper, every one of you going to bed, kneel down upon your knees, and desire of God his pardon for what you have done amiss this day, and his blessing upon what you have heard, and his acceptance of what you have endeavoured in his service.

15. Perform all this chearfully, and uprightly, and honestly: and account it not a burthen to you; for assure yourselves you shall find a blessing from God in so doing. And remember it is your father that tells you so, and *that loves you, and will not deceive you.*

And

And thus I have written to you of the observation of the Lord's day; wherein, though I have omitted many things that might have been fit to be inserted, yet you must consider that I had but a small portion of time allowed me to write, while I lay at an inn, and upon that day wherein I have performed those duties, which I now enjoin you. Let the original be laid up safely for your brother R——, and every one of you take copies of it, that you may thereby remember the counsels of,

Dear Children,

Your loving father,

MATTHEW HALE.

October 20, 1662.

F I N I S.



